

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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FM AMCONSUL MEDAN

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INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY MANILA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEDAN 009

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

MANILA FOR EAPS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, ID, PORS

SUBJECT: JAN. 10 UPDATE ON ARUN SECURITY SITUATION

43*: MEDAN 512

1. AT CONSULATE MEETING JAN. 9 WITH MOBIL/MEDAN OFFICIALS TO REVIEW ARUN SECURITY SITUATION AND E & E PLANNING, MOBIL REPORTED THAT THEIR OFFICERS HAD UNFORTUNATELY NOT BEEN BRIEFED BY INDONESIAN MILITARY INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS AT THE FIELD SITE LAST WEEK AS ANTICIPATED, BUT ANOTHER BRIEFING TIME SHOULD BE SCHEDULED SOON. TWO REPORTS HAD COME FROM A MOBIL SEISMIC TEAM, HOWEVER, WHICH HAD BEEN WORKING IN A VERY REMOTE FOREST AREA AROUND LHOK SUKON GAS FIELD (SOMETIMES AS MUCH AS EIGHT HOURS HIKING TIME INTO THE FOREST) AND WHICH RAN ACROSS TWO SUSPICIOUS INDONESIAN GROUPS IN EARLY JANUARY. THIS 45 MEMBER SEISMIC TEAM WAS MADE UP ENTIRELY OF INDONESIANS, CONFIDENTIAL

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MANY OF THEM ACEHNESE. ON JAN. 1 THE TEAM CAME UPON A CAMP DEEP IN THE FOREST WITH FIVE ACEHNESE WHO UNSUCCESSFULLY ATTEMPTED TO OBTAIN MONEY AND FOOD FROM THEM. THE IMPLICATION OF THIS REPORT WAS THAT THE GROUP WAS DEFINITELY HOSTILE, ALTHOUGH THEY SHOWED NO GUNS DURING THE ENCOUNTER. ON JAN. 3, IN ANOTHER REMOTE FOREST AREA, THEY SAW THREE ACEHNESE WALKING DOWN A PATH CARRYING RIFLES; THESE ARMED ACEHNESE DID NOT

TRY TO PROVOKE AN INCIDENT BUT SIMPLY DISAPPEARED INTO THE FOREST. BECAUSE THESE FOREST AREAS ARE NOT TOO DISTANT FROM THE TRANSMIGRATION VILLAGE WHERE THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT FOR ACEH (NLFA) ATTEMPTED EXTORTION OF MONEY BY FORCE IN DECEMBER (SEE REFTTEL), THE ASSUMPTION IS THAT THESE GROUPS COULD WELL BE NLFA MEMBERS OR SUPPORTERS LIVING IN THE FOREST. INDONESIAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO THE AREA TO INVESTIGATE. THE REPORTS HAVE AT LEAST INSPIRED MORE ALERTNESS ON THE PART OF THE SECURITY FORCES AT ARUN THAN MIGHT OTHERWISE HAVE BEEN THE CASE.

2. BECAUSE OF ITS IMMENSE POTENTIAL AS A MATERIAL FOR SABOTAGE AT THE GAS FIELD, MOBIL OFFICIALS ARE UNDERSTANDABLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE DYNAMITE SUPPLY EMPLOYED BY THE SEISMIC TEAM FOR ITS WORK. ONE SUPPLY SOURCE IS ONLY ABOUT A FIFTEEN MINUTE RIDE AWAY FROM LHOK SUKON GAS FIELD. INDONESIAN MILITARY TROOPS ARE PRESENTLY GUARDING THIS LOCATION, AND THE TEAM CANNOT CARRY MORE THAN ONE DAY'S SUPPLY OF DYNAMITE AND HAS NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR ITS CARE AND FOR REPORTING ON ITS USE. IT REMAINS, NONETHELESS, A CAUSE FOR NERVOUSNESS AND ARMED TROOPS ARE BEING STATIONED AT GAS WELL HEADS OUTSIDE THE FENCED IN AREAS LHOK SUKON AS AN EXTRA SECURITY MEASURE IN THIS REGARD.

3. FOR THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS, MOBIL HAS EXPENDED CONSIDERABLE TIME ON DEVELOPING A MORE DETAILED E AND E PLAN FOR THE ENTIRE

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ARUN LNG PROJECT. EVEN THOUGH BECHTEL PERSONNEL WILL BE ALMOST ENTIRELY PHASED OUT BY THE END OF APRIL, MOBIL PERSONNEL WILL STAY ON, AND IN SOME AREAS BE AUGMENTED, IN ORDER TO MANAGE AND MAINTAIN THE LNG/CONDENSATE OPERATION. FURTHER, IN ORDER TO STILL SOME OF THE GRUMBLING HEARD AMONG MOBIL/BECHTEL WORKER RANKS ABOUT LACK OF ADEQUATE PROTECTION PLANS, IT HAS BEEN ESSENTIAL FOR MORALE REASONS AS WELL FOR MOBIL TO PRODUCE AN IMPROVED E AND E PLAN QUICKLY. THE NEW PLAN INCLUDES FUTURE INSTALLATION OF MORE SOPHISTICATED COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES, A MORE ORGANIZED WARDEN SYSTEM, PERHAPS THE ADDITION OF A LARGER AIRCRAFT TO THE PRESENT MOBIL FLEET IN CASE AIR EVACUATION IS NEEDED, BETTER LISTINGS OF WHO IS IN THE FIELD (VERSUS MEDAN OR SINGAPORE) AT ANY GIVEN TIME, POSSIBILITIES FOR OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE, ETC. AS PART OF THIS EXERCISE, WE OURSELVES WILL BE SUBMITTING A SEPARATE MESSAGE SOON WITH MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON ARUN THAN IS CURRENTLY FOUND IN THE POST'S OWN E AND E PLAN.

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